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**THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL FIRMS SEMIOTIC
ADVERTISING EFFICACY ON GEN-Y BRAND EQUITY AND
PURCHASE INTENT OF SMART PHONES**



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UUM
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PURCHASE INTENT OF SMART PHONES**



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**A Thesis Submitted to Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of Government,
in fulfillment of the Requirement for Master of Science (International Business)
Universiti Utara Malaysia**

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to demonstrate the influence of semiotic advertising efficacy on Generation Y's brand equity and purchase intention towards smartphone. Semiotic advertising is an effective, modern approach to advertising that focuses on the use of different signs, symbols, images and other visual aids for the purpose of marketing a given product or service. Since these signs tend to create an image of the brand in consumers' mind and also demonstrates the brand association with their cultural orientation, beliefs and values, semiotic advertising is said to have a significant impact on the brand equity as perceived by Generation Y consumers. This study also assumes that brand equity, based on its components of perception, recognition, parity, loyalty and trust positively influences Generation Y's purchase intentions towards smartphone. In addition, semiotic advertising is also expected to have a positive influence on buyer's purchase intention. Data for this research were collected from 620 Generation Y smart phone users using a survey method, based on the semiotic advertising of four main smartphone brands namely Oppo, Samsung, iPhone and Lenovo. The survey instruments were self-developed by the researcher to measure semiotic advertising efficacy, brand equity and purchase intentions as perceived towards advertisements of four smart phones shown to the respondents while undertaking the survey. Surveys were distributed to Generation Y in three main states in Malaysia namely Kuala Lumpur, Johor and Kedah. It is hence concluded from the findings that the Generation Y's purchase intentions towards smartphone increase when the efficacy of semiotic advertising increases. Thus, firms need to ensure that the visual elements and semiotics used in their brand advertisements align with the cultural characteristics of buyers in order to enhance their overall efficacy.

Keywords: Semiotic Advertising, Brand Equity, Purchase Intention, Brand Loyalty, Generation Y

ABSTRAK

Objektif kajian ini ialah untuk menunjukkan pengaruh keberkesanan pengiklanan semiotik ke atas ekuiti jenama dan niat terhadap pembelian telefon pintar oleh Generasi Y. Pengiklanan semiotik adalah pendekatan moden yang berkesan dalam pengiklanan yang memberi tumpuan kepada penggunaan tanda, simbol, imej, dan alat visual lain bertujuan untuk memasarkan produk atau perkhidmatan tertentu. Oleh kerana tanda-tanda ini cenderung mewujudkan imej jenama dalam minda pengguna dan juga menunjukkan kaitan jenama dengan orientasi budaya, kepercayaan dan nilai budaya, pengiklanan semiotik dikatakan mempunyai kesan yang signifikan terhadap ekuiti jenama seperti yang dilihat oleh pelanggan Generasi Y. Kajian ini juga menganggap bahawa ekuiti jenama berdasarkan komponennya iaitu persepsi, pengiktirafan, pariti, kesetiaan, dan kepercayaan mempengaruhi secara positif niat pembelian Generasi Y terhadap telefon pintar. Tambahan pula, iklan semiotik juga dijangka mempunyai pengaruh positif terhadap niat pembelian pembeli. Data untuk kajian ini dikumpul daripada 620 pengguna telefon pintar Generasi Y dengan menggunakan kaedah kaji selidik, berdasarkan kepada pengiklanan semiotik empat jenama telefon pintar utama iaitu; Oppo, Samsung, iPhone dan Lenovo. Instrumen kaji selidik telah dibangunkan oleh penyelidik sendiri untuk mengukur keberkesanan pengiklanan semiotik, ekuiti jenama, dan niat pembelian seperti yang dilihat terhadap iklan empat telefon pintar yang ditunjukkan kepada responden semasa menjalankan kaji selidik. Soal selidik telah diagihkan kepada Generasi Y di tiga negeri utama di Malaysia iaitu Kuala Lumpur, Johor dan Kedah. Oleh yang demikian, kesimpulan dari penemuan kajian adalah niat pembelian pengguna Generasi Y terhadap telefon pintar meningkat apabila keberkesanan iklan semiotik meningkat. Maka, firma perlu memastikan agar elemen visual dan semiotik digunakan dalam iklan jenama mereka sejajar dengan ciri-ciri kebudayaan pembeli untuk meningkatkan keberkesanan secara keseluruhannya.

Kata Kunci: Pengiklanan semiotik; Ekuiti jenama; Niat pembelian; Kesetiaan jenama; Generasi Y

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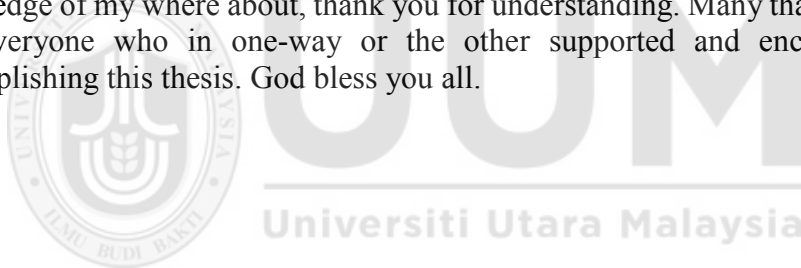


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

This study was specifically undertaken to examine semiotic advertising and its impact on international companies to persuade the Gen Y. The generation of people who were born during the 1980s to early 1990s are called generation Y or Gen Y (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). This term is basically based on Generation X, which preceded the Gen Y. The individuals categorized under Gen Y are referred to as ‘echo boomers’ because they are the children of parents who were born during the baby boom era. In addition, the individuals born in this category have better access to the Internet and other technologies in comparison to the baby boomers.

Moreover, today’s generations are much more racially and ethnically diverse because they are more segmented as an audience and are aided by the rapid expansion of Cable TV and the Internet. It was also identified that the Gen Y is less brand loyal and such children are raised in dual income families. Table 1.1 below shows the age range of Gen Y and Gen X and its global population size.

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